

SECURING SENSITIVE CONFIGURATION DATA REMOTELY**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5 Personal computer (PC) systems that are remotely managed are equipped with
protected storage that is accessible only by Basic Input Output System (BIOS) code. The
protected storage has the capacity to store a symmetrical encryption Key. An
electronically erasable programmable read only memory (EEPROM) which normally
10 contains the BIOS code is used to store accessible configuration data as well as
previously remotely inaccessible sensitive access information (e.g., passwords). The
EEPROM is write protected with standard write protect algorithms and access the
alterable EEPROM data is through write requests to the BIOS code. Previously remotely
inaccessible sensitive data is encrypted with the symmetrical encryption Key by the
BIOS code. Remote access to the sensitive data is accomplished via change requests
15 submitted to the BIOS code over a secure channel. The BIOS code has data that allows
it to determine if the request is valid. If the request is valid, the sensitive data is
decrypted, altered, encrypted, and re-written into the EEPROM. Normal access to
accessible data is un-affected and remote access is allowed by validated runtime agents
without changing system architecture. Also protected storage is reduced and its size
20 is not dependent on the amount of secure data in the PC system.

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